

The Windrush  
Commissioners'  
Scorecard:  
Five Interventions  
for 2026

**ACTION FOR RACE  
EQUALITY**

## Who we are

Action for Race Equality champions fairness, challenges race discrimination and pioneers innovative solutions to empower Black, Asian and Mixed Heritage communities through education, employment, and enterprise. Through our **Windrush Justice Programme**, we fund and do capacity building work with 26 Windrush advocacy groups covering Wales, the Midlands, the Northwest, and London. These small, grassroots groups, embedded in their communities, support people applying to the Windrush Scheme for Documentation and the Windrush Compensation Scheme.

### Jeremy Crook, Chief Executive Action for Race Equality

“The Windrush Commissioner has a critical role to play in securing justice for Windrush survivors. ARE and our network of community advocates want to see our five policy interventions implemented, so redress is swiftly delivered. We urge the Commissioner to prioritise these interventions across 2026.”

## Early Progress and Urgent Priorities

The Windrush Commissioner has been in post for seven months and has [set out his stall](#) to secure justice for survivors of the Home Office Scandal. His focus on urgent reform of the compensation scheme including speeding up the compensation claims process, and an independent review by his office of nil awards, supporting individuals stuck overseas and securing status for all, is a welcome start.

**We will continue to work with the Commissioner and offer our support to deliver on these proposals and recommendations.**

With only a three-year term, and so many survivors waiting for status, compensation and truth, it's vital that the Commissioner uses his influence promptly and precisely on the interventions that will have the biggest impact.

On the next page, based on the expertise and experiences of groups on our [Windrush Justice Programme](#), we outline 5 key interventions that the Commissioner should prioritise, keeping the pressure on the Home Office to make progress on during his first year in office.



## 5 KEY INTERVENTIONS

### Fund Legal Representation

With the support of a lawyer, Windrush claimants are far more likely to succeed with their claim and receive bigger offers. On average claimants receive £83,200 with a lawyer vs £11,400 without, as reported by [JUSTICE](#). The Commissioner has agreed to meet with JUSTICE to discuss their findings, and we welcome this.

In October 2025, the [government announced](#) that all Post Office Horizon victims will be entitled to free legal advice to help them with their offers. The change was made in response to the first report from the statutory public inquiry into the scandal.

The Home Office Scandal is the only state injustice that has not had a statutory inquiry or where funded legal representation is not provided. It is also the only compensation scheme that is non-statutory. The Infected Blood Compensation Authority, which has approved independent legal companies to provide free support outside of the legal aid system, could be a model for Windrush claimants.

**The Commissioner should push for publicly funded, independent legal representation for all claimants, in line with other national compensation schemes.**

Without legal expertise, survivors cannot gather evidence, challenge decisions, or understand complex case files. Justice delayed without legal representation is justice denied.



### Leonie Shaw-Brown, Director Windrush Advocacy and Community Alliance

“The victims of the Home Office Scandal need essential funded legal representation and community-led advocacy services, not just claims assistance. We believe a holistic approach is needed, that centres on dignity, empowerment and justice, to assist the Windrush victims to heal from their traumatic ordeal and thrive as integral members of society.”

## Remove the MP Mechanism

To make a complaint about the Compensation Scheme or a compensation decision by the Adjudicator's Office, Windrush claimants must ask their Member of Parliament (MP) to raise their case with the [Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman](#) (PHSO). Access to justice is therefore dependent on whether the claimant's MP is willing, responsive, or effective.

**The Commissioner should work to abolish the MP Mechanism and establish a right of appeal with a fair and independent appeals process.**

**An independent statutory body, the model used to remedy other state injustices, is a potential solution for the Commissioner and Home Office to consider.**

Access to justice should be a right, not a lottery.

**Kimberly McIntosh, Windrush Policy Manager  
Action for Race Equality**

“This hurdle on the journey to justice for Windrush claimants must be removed. Making a complaint about the compensation scheme should not be contingent on the interest and discretion of your local MP. Challenging a compensation decision is already distressing. Instead of a perverse lottery, Windrush survivors deserve a fair and independent appeals process, as is the case for other compensation schemes.”

## End Zero Offers

We are pleased to see the Commissioner prioritising action on zero offers and suggesting his office should [independently review](#) the necessary data.

The application success rate for the compensation scheme is low, with two thirds (66%) of claimants [denied compensation](#). **Over 6000 eligible claims have been rejected and offered nothing** by the Home Office. Given the barriers to accessing the scheme, the high proportion of zero offer decisions is concerning.

The Home Office has said that the number of nil awards is due to misinformation that has proliferated online that misidentifies the harm that is entitled to compensation. However, groups on our [Windrush Justice Programme](#) have told us that although this is an issue, the key issue is that Windrush claimants are unable to prove their entitlement to compensation due

to the complexity of the scheme and the lack of funded legal representation available.

**The Commissioner should ensure that his review into the disproportionate number of zero offers assesses both issues.**

**Following the review, he should encourage the Home Office to publish a time bound action plan to reduce the number of nil awards.**

**Additionally, he should push for a new, independent review option for claimants who applied without legal support and/or accepted low offers.**

By ending zero offers, the Commissioner would ensure that Windrush claimants get the compensation they deserve.

**Hyacinth Shirley-McLaughlin, Chief Executive  
Genius ARCT (WJP group)**

“Zero offers deepen mistrust, prolong trauma, and undermine accountability to affected communities. They often arise from complex rules, strict evidence demands, and a lack of legal support, leaving eligible claimants without redress. If addressed, fairer decision-making would improve success rates and restore confidence in the scheme.”

**66%**  
Claimants denied compensation

**600+**  
eligible claims have been rejected or offered nothing



## Strengthen the Advocacy Ecosystem

Our [Windrush Justice Programme](#), which supports grassroots groups that assist survivors with their claims, has shown how vital trusted, community-based advocacy is. We welcome the launch of the government's £1.5 million [Windrush Compensation Advocacy Support Fund](#) (WCSASF) and the announcement of the first round of funding.

However, without the provision of fully funded legal representation, it's only a partial solution, not the comprehensive one Windrush survivors need. Equally, some groups on the Windrush Justice Programme have raised concerns about the application process and assessment criteria.

We are pleased that the Commissioner has made the WCSASF a priority and wants to ensure it is sustainable and effective.

### Johnbie Mpinda, Windrush Claims Advocacy Lead and Community Dev Worker (65+) – Croydon BME Forum

“Strengthening this ecosystem empowers organisations like Croydon BME Forum to stand alongside applicants, providing the vital guidance and support needed to navigate the compensation scheme effectively. This not only secures justice for individuals but also upholds the accountability of our institutions and helps restore trust within marginalised communities.”

**The Commissioner should work with the WCSASF team to ensure it is meeting the needs of grassroots advocacy organisations and Windrush survivors and that there is a plan to increase support in areas where there is need but little to no advocacy services.**

**Additionally, he should make sure it is working symbiotically with the Windrush Community Engagement Fund, so that activity to increase awareness of the Windrush Schemes happens alongside an increase in advocacy support.**

Only a holistic programme of support will enable Windrush survivors to access the Windrush Schemes effectively.

**The Commissioner should work with Windrush survivors and advocates to develop a reconciliation programme that centres truth for victims and accountability for perpetrators of the scandal.**

Reconciliation, for survivors, should encompass a 'truth' process that ought to be an advocacy moment for survivors and their families to push for accountability and change.

## Truth Before Reconciliation

Survivors should have the space to share their stories and how their experiences have impacted them with the perpetrators of harm. Survivors and advocates have told us there is scepticism about what the government will deliver and concern that reconciliation events will be rushed through and used as an opportunity to say Windrush is 'completed'.



# The Windrush Commissioner's Scorecard for 2026

Key Intervention		✓ Check
1.	Fund Legal Representation	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	Remove the MP Mechanism	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	End Zero Offers	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	Strengthen the Advocacy Ecosystem	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	Truth Before Reconciliation	<input type="checkbox"/>

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